

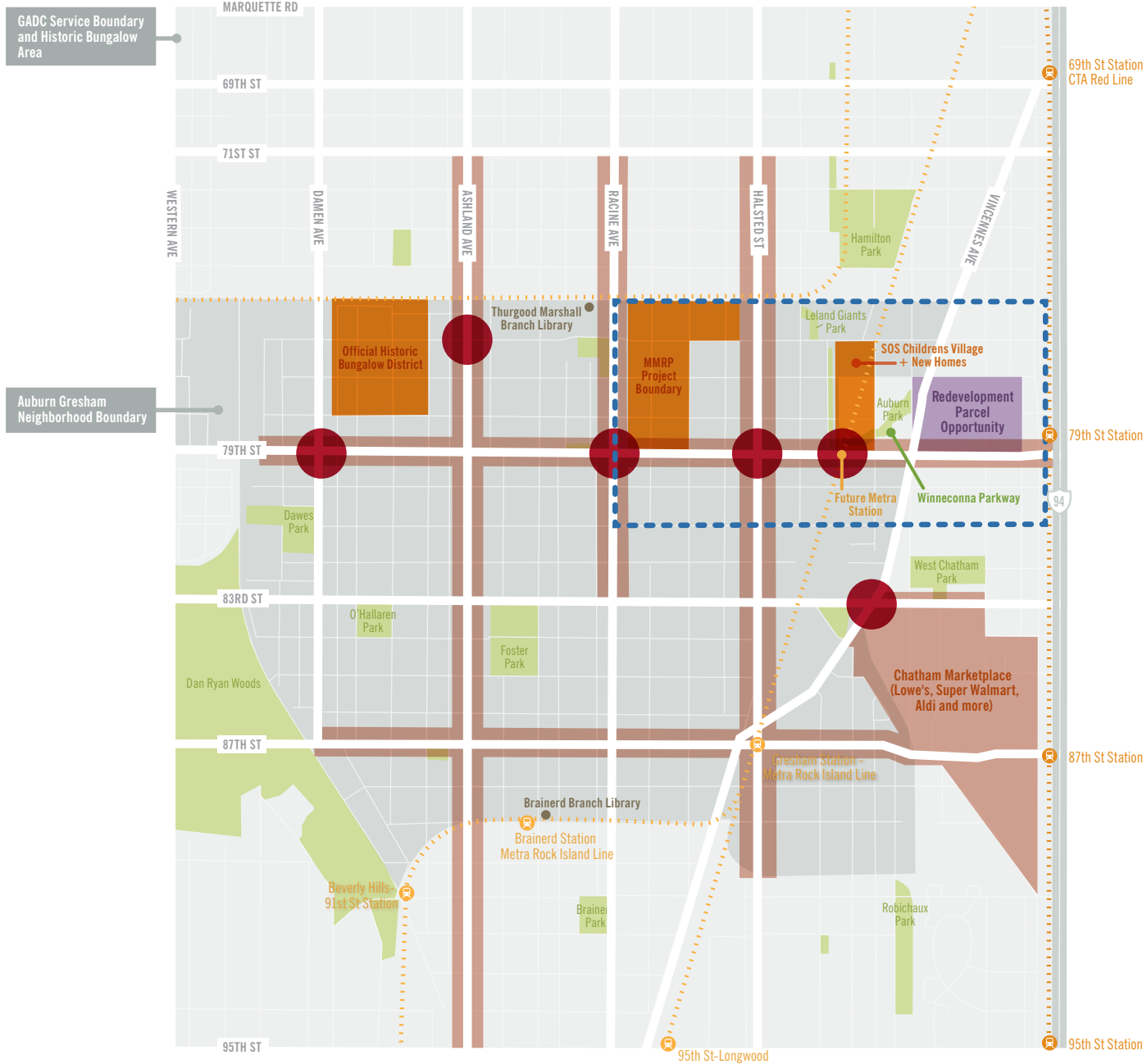
AUBURN GRESHAM: YOUR VOICE MATTERS



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DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



- Large-scale Redevelopment Opportunity
- Commercial Corridor
- Model Residential Areas
- - - TOD** Study Area
- Key Opportunity Nodes

* Micro Market Recovery Program (MMRP)
 ** Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

We are Auburn Gresham, a predominantly African-American community, rich with history, culture and aspirations. We will achieve the hopes and dreams of our community and support our families, our youth and our elderly residents in their efforts to live high quality, richly-fulfilled lives. We will provide the community with necessary healthcare, housing, educational opportunities, business development resources, public safety support and other necessities of life to create a holistic and vibrant community.

We will work to address community weaknesses and to overcome negative perceptions of our community. This quality-of-life plan called, "Your Voice Matters," gives the community a platform to move forward and shape decision making in our community. We will become a community where existing and future residents thrive.

Auburn Gresham is located on Chicago's south side and has a shared history with the neighboring communities of Washington Heights, Chatham and West Chatham, Greater Grand Crossing and Englewood, making up the heart of the city's south side African-American community. We are most

noted for our historic bungalow belt and our brick two-flats, the bustling corridors of 79th Street and 87th Street, and the network of strong community based organizations and faith based institutions. Less commonly known are the serene and picturesque lagoons of Auburn Park along Winneconna Parkway and our strong group of seniors that work hard to keep the community clean and safe. These assets speak to our community's commitment to a high quality of life. We are a hard-working community dedicated to improving our schools, housing and business environment while celebrating block clubs and other resident initiatives.

We have challenges to overcome, but the energy of the community continues to create momentum towards the positive.

This quality-of-life plan is based on creating strategies responsive to resident needs and desires for the community, by the community. It builds on our first community-led quality-of-life plan, published through the LISC Chicago New Communities Program in 2005, both looking ahead further and bringing in new partners. More than 1,000 participants engaged in workshops, open houses, task force groups and focused interviews during the eight month planning process. Community members gathered at the project kick-off to determine the priority issue areas to be investigated. Residents then self-selected into task force groups – business, economic development and jobs; education and youth development; health and wellness; housing; safety, security and faith-based institutions; and senior services. This comprehensive neighborhood plan uncovered our community's vision and goals, culminating in a set of strategies, ideas and programs that will define the future of Auburn Gresham.



Auburn Gresham has demand for additional business activity along existing commercial corridors, with over \$525 million in untapped purchasing power to support it – but we must also work with vulnerable populations to find viable work.

Business, economic development and jobs:

Businesses in Auburn Gresham are committed to serving our community and each other. Additional resources and education will ensure growth of the local business community and will encourage new business development. In addition, our residents will be able to receive the training they need to secure living-wage employment.

We will:

- Strengthen relationships with business owners and cultivate entrepreneurs from the community
- Create an attraction and retention strategy for desirable businesses in the community
- Create services that address critical issues important to vulnerable populations including: returning citizens, veterans, students who leave high school before graduation, youth, wards of the state and grandparents raising grandkids
- Enhance existing commercial corridors and define community gateways through catalytic projects like a healthy living hub, connected to the broader market

Education and Youth Development: The topic of education created very passionate dialogue amongst a large group of residents, stakeholders, school administrators and community based practitioners. The common theme that repeatedly surfaced is that the community should be a place for lifelong learners, from early childhood through high school, college, and continuing to adult education for returning citizens, seniors or other adults. Our youth organized their own conversations during planning, and these young leaders were diligent throughout the process in expressing their needs and working with adults in all of the task force groups to have their voice heard. Together we will realize their vision for a supportive community as they become our next generation of home and business owners.

We will:

- Improve neighborhood schools and provide students with access to highly trained, committed, culturally responsive urban educator
- Support traditional and nontraditional educational opportunities by creating learning opportunities that are responsive to the needs of all students
- Expand and maintain the innovative community school model throughout our schools that supports social-emotional development and encourages youth and family engagement in a safe and nurturing learning environment

Health and Wellness: Our community is focused on becoming spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically healthy through increased access to nutritious foods, healthcare and rehabilitative services.

We will:

- Strengthen awareness within the community of existing health and wellness resources through both print and electronic media
- Build a neighborhood culture of health by integrating holistic health focus into existing classes and programs offered within the community
- Increase the social connections among community residents focused on cultivating the overall well-being of families
- Develop a Healthy Lifestyle Hub for Auburn Gresham and south side residents on 79th Street

Housing: We will provide adequate housing for our residents through both new construction and rehabilitation of existing structures. We respect the history of our historic buildings and will create opportunities for greater levels of homeownership. We will promote the housing stock of our community and provide focused support to renters.

We will:

- Increase the safety and security of our residential blocks by focusing on beautification efforts, neighborhood investment, engagement and awareness of block clubs
- Encourage the purchase and rehabilitation of vacant lots and existing residential buildings
- Foster neighborhood stability through increased homeownership
- Strengthen the renter and ownership pool through creation of support systems and focused attraction and retention programs



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Safety, Security and Faith-based Institutions:

We will work towards greater cooperation between law enforcement, restorative justice and faith based institutions to create a peaceful community in which residents value each other and their contributions.

We will:

- Foster community beautification by partnering with schools, churches and organizations
- Enhance neighborhood pride programs by fostering collaboration between programs of mutual interest or similar subject matter
- Increase participation in community crime prevention programs such as C.A.P.S.
- Create opportunities for faith based institutions to share resources and establish relationships to better serve the community

Seniors: Our senior population consists of long-time residents who carry the history of the neighborhood and continue to be engaged in large numbers. We will seek out supportive services that focus on preventative healthcare, physical exercise and increased accessibility to programs for this dedicated group.

We will:

- Expand efforts to integrate public health, continuing education, fitness and wellness services for the aging
- Enhance outreach of senior activities through the creation of a communications network
- Provide options for seniors to participate in fitness and movement-based programs

Auburn Gresham is experiencing a rebirth that begins with leveraging our existing assets and utilizing the talents and commitment of our residents. Institutional and organizational partnerships are expanding and new relationships are being formed. We will continue to foster these relationships and grow the capacity of the community as a whole.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Cynthia Boyd, *University of Illinois at Chicago*

Howard Brookins, *21st Ward Alderman*

Ronald Browne, *North Beverly Civic Association*

Rodney Blissett, *6th Police District Commander*

Jacqueline Collins, *State Senator*

Derrick Curtis, *18th Ward Alderman*

Monique Dockery, *Principal, Westcott Elementary*

Robert Lee, *Illinois State University*

Winston McGill, *6th Ward Office*

David Moore, *17th Ward Alderman*

Deborah Moore, *Neighborhood Housing Services*

Stanley Moore, *Cook County Commissioner*

Carlos Nelson, *Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation*

Michael Pfleger, *St. Sabina Church*

Autry Phillips, *Target Development*

Lisa Ramsey, *Employment Resource Center*

John Roberson, *17th Ward Office*

Roderick Sawyer, *6th Ward Alderman*

Janece Simmons, *Neighborhood Housing Services*

Ernest Spradley, *6th Police District Sergeant*

Chaquita Starks, *18th Ward Office*

Vernon Wiltz, *18th Ward Office*

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Pamela Aldridge	James Drake, Sr.	Robert Lee	Autry Phillips
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Brenda Bell	Glenda Franklin	Mariah Mack	Alicia Roberts
Ta Benz	Domini Gamble	Alene Mason	Felicia Roberts
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Pam Bosley	Kwadjo Glenn	Melvinia Mayo	Norma Sanders
Trevon Bosley	Nicole Grant	Jasmine McCalpin	Mark Sciacca
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Cheryl Brown	Barbara Hart	Thomas Moes	Stan Smith
Ronald Browne	Kimberly Henderson	Camille Montgomery	Toi Robertson-Smith
Shirley Bryant	Michael Holmes	Christopher Montgomery	Wayne Smith
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Iona Calhoun	Monica Hughes	Cassandra Moorer	Jlyah Springfield
Dangelo Carter	Christa Hunt	Larry Moorer	Debra Stanford
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Linda Clarke	Cheryl Johnson	Bobby Nelson	Beverly Taylor-Williams
Betty Clayton	Dan Johnson	Carlos Nelson	Nakia Terry
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	Alex Landberg	Steve Perkins	Wendy Young
		Babette Peyton	

View the plan online: www.auburngreshamportal.org

For more information:

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